

bill, as passed the House, follows their recommendation and their advice to Congress, which they made unanimously, that Congress increase payments by 3 percent, which is what this legislation does. We will be spending billions and billions of dollars on Medicare. We are trying to do it in a responsible way that follows the advice of the nonpartisan experts that Congress has looked to in the past to help guide us in these matters.

So again, I would say that there will be a tremendous amount in this legislation for providers, particularly in rural areas. I represent a rural area in Michigan. And just to give Iowa as an example, they will ultimately receive a 5.5 percent increase in Medicare payments above what they would have received under current law. Again, that does not include the increases that they would receive for the 51 critical access hospitals in Iowa. So there will still be, I think, a significant help to make sure that there will be access to health care in rural areas. It is a critical issue, and this legislation provides for that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, we have heard today about the problems in this bill. It is important that we stand up for hospitals, for seniors, and for rural America. For too long, America's rural hospitals have received Medicare funding far below the amount paid for the same service to their urban counterparts. Further, Medicare's base payment and DSH payments are less for rural hospitals and include an arbitrary cap. The results are very predictable. There has been an overall Medicare operating margin of negative 2.9 percent, and that has had a terrible impact on rural health care.

Let us stand up for our seniors. Let us stand up for rural hospitals. Let us make sure that we have a prescription drug plan that is guaranteed. We know the cost, we know what it covers, it is available, and that does not have a doughnut hole. Let us work together. I am urging my colleagues to support the motion to instruct conferees, because the instructions in this motion are the very ones that are not being worked out in a bipartisan way or in any way at all by the conference committee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). All time for debate has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SANDLIN).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 1308, TAX RELIEF, SIMPLIFICATION, AND EQUITY ACT OF 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. PALLONE moves that the manager on the part of the House in the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 1308 be instructed as follows:

1. The House conferees shall be instructed to include in the conference report the provision of the Senate amendment (not included in the House amendment) that provides immediate payments to taxpayers receiving an additional credit by reason of the bill in the same manner as other taxpayers were entitled to immediate payments under the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003.

2. The House conferees shall be instructed to include in the conference report the provision of the Senate amendment (not included in the House amendment) that provides families of military personnel serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other combat zones a child credit based on the earnings of the individuals serving the combat zone.

3. The House conferees shall be instructed to include in the conference report all of the other provisions of the Senate amendment and shall not report back a conference report that includes additional tax benefits not offset by other provisions.

4. To the maximum extent possible within the scope of conference, the House conferees shall be instructed to include in the conference report other tax benefits for military personnel and the families of the astronauts who died in the Columbia disaster.

5. The House conferees shall, as soon as practicable after the adoption of this motion, meet in open session with the Senate conferees and the House conferees shall file a conference report consistent with the preceding provisions of this instruction, not later than the second legislative day after adoption of this motion.

Mr. PALLONE (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the motion be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DUNN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I offer this motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 1308, the child tax credit bill. My motion makes five specific instructions of the House conferees.

Mr. Speaker, there would be no reason for us to address this issue tonight

had the Republicans not deliberately ignored the well-being of 12 million children in its latest tax law. The omission of a provision that would have extended a \$400 child tax credit to working families making \$10,000 to \$26,000 a year was neither an accident nor an oversight.

The provision, which had not been included in President Bush's initial \$726 billion proposal or the House Republicans' \$550 billion version, was added in the other body by Democratic Senator BLANCHE LINCOLN.

Now, why did this considerably small provision, \$3.5 billion out of a giant \$350 billion tax bill, make the Republicans chopping block? Well, anyone who has followed things around the House over the last couple of years unfortunately knows the answer to that question: this House, the people's House, under the Republican majority, has been turned over to the powerful and the privileged. Week in and week out, the Republican leadership neglects middle- and lower-income Americans.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans have a chance tonight to begin to rectify that image. First, my motion instructs the House conferees to include in the conference report a provision in the Senate bill that provides immediate payments to the 6.5 million working and military families who were initially left out of the Republicans' 2003 tax bill.

Mr. Speaker, House Democrats are fighting to immediately enact the bipartisan Senate-passed bill so we can help the 12 million children that Republicans left behind. Now, I think it is outrageous that it has been more than 3 months since the Senate overwhelmingly passed a measure, 94 to 2, to immediately give an increased child tax credit to the millions of children previously left out. If the House Republicans truly wanted to fix this injustice, they would have immediately approved the Senate measure. My motion simply instructs them to do just that, so that we can be fair to these working families and provide them the same benefits that many other Americans received this summer.

Mr. Speaker, the second part of my motion instructs the conferees to include in the conference report a provision included in the Senate bill that provides families of military personnel serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other combat zones a child credit based on the earnings of the individual serving in the combat zone. The House Republican bill contains bad news for the children of the 200,000 men and women serving in Iraq or other combat zones. The Republican bill leaves in place current law under which families will face tax increases because combat pay is not counted for purposes of the child tax credit.

Now, let me give an example of what I mean here. Let us take an E-5 Sergeant with 6 years of service and two children who is paid \$29,000 a year. Generally, both of his children would

be entitled to the full \$1,000 tax credit; but if he is over in Iraq for 6 months, his credit would drop to \$450 under the House bill. Now, how can we take a critical benefit away from the family of a soldier who is now over in Iraq risking his life?

Third, Mr. Speaker, the motion instructs the House to include in the conference report all of the other provisions of the Senate bill and not report back a conference report that includes additional tax benefits not offset by other provisions. If my colleagues have noticed, in the Senate bill, the \$3.5 million for the child tax credit addition is fully offset.

House Republicans, I believe, are exploiting the child tax credit provision passed, and even more tax cuts that will saddle our children with mountains of debt. The House Republican bill costs more than \$80 billion, while only \$3.5 billion is needed to make sure that these children and their families are treated fairly; and that is fully offset, as I said, in the Senate bill. I think it is based on a Customs duty or a Customs tax. In other words, it does not add any money at all to the Federal deficit.

Now, the House action is particularly reckless and irresponsible considering the Republicans' tax policies have already produced a record \$400 billion deficit that continues to climb. I think it is almost \$500 billion at this point.

Fourth, Mr. Speaker, to the maximum extent possible within this bill in the conference, the House conferees are instructed to include in the conference report other tax benefits for military personnel, as well as the families of the astronauts who died in the Columbia disaster.

And the fifth section of the motion instructs conferees to, as soon as practicable, after the adoption of this motion, meet in open session with the Senate conferees; and the House conferees should then file a conference report consistent with this motion no later than 2 legislative days from today.

□ 1400

Mr. Speaker, this is the 21st motion to instruct that my Democratic colleagues and I have brought to this House attempting to bring right this wrong. I have personally been here many times to argue this same or a similar motion. How many nights will we Democrats have to come to this floor to fight for the 12 million children of low-income parents who were neglected by the Republicans in their latest tax bill?

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, I am the father of three children, and I received a \$1,200 check, \$400 for each of the three children. It pains me to think, based on my income as a Congressman, that many of my constituents who have one, three, or more children were not able to get that \$400 per child, because they certainly need it a lot more than me.

This neglect on the part of the Republicans has to come to an end this evening. It is simply a question of fairness. How can Republicans say it is fair to give a millionaire a tax break, or a Congressman a tax break, while giving nothing to millions of working families. It is time for the Republican majority to join us in passing this motion to instruct conferees so we can finally resolve this injustice, an injustice that should have been rectified many months ago.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion. The House has considered similar motion on 14 different occasions in the last month. And just as those previously, this motion will deny millions of families the relief we have already proposed by broadening coverage under the child tax credit.

Earlier this year, the House passed House bill 1308, the All American Tax Relief Act. This very important legislation includes increasing the child tax credit through the end of the decade. We all agree on expanding the refundability of the child tax credit. On a bipartisan basis, we want to broaden the child credit's availability to more families. This is one reason why H.R. 1308 not only increased the child credit to \$1,000, but also eliminated the marriage penalty in the child credit. We also agree that those serving this Nation in uniform should receive tax relief, including the increases in the child credit. That is included in House resolution 1308. We differ, however, on how to achieve these goals.

This vote is not about denying a refundable tax credit to certain families. It is about helping more working families get tax relief for a longer period of time. A vote for this Democrat motion would reduce the child credit to 2 years instead of maintaining the credit at \$1,000 and making it permanent over the decade.

Who realistically believes we should allow the credit to revert to \$700 a year in just 2 years?

A vote for this motion would eliminate the possibility of more married couples with children receiving the child credit. A vote for this motion would deny tax relief to members of the Armed Forces. Much of the cost of the House bill goes toward maintaining the child credit at \$1,000 until 2010.

I hope no one will hide behind the rhetoric of deficit reduction. The fact is we should insist on keeping our provisions in the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to belabor matters that have been exhaustively debated day, after day, after day on the floor on the many occasions that I referenced. I think it is important for folks to realize that all of these provisions are included in House Resolution 1308, that the House of Representatives has passed that piece of legislation, stands behind it and the other provi-

sions included in that legislation, and vote no on this motion.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague on the other side, and I have heard this so many times now. With respect, the notion that the Republicans have already passed a bill that is much broader belies the fact that they are not willing to move in the conference to do anything. This conference has not even met on this bill. I know this gentlewoman is well-intentioned but she suggests that somehow the House Republicans have passed a better bill, well, what good is a House-passed bill versus a Senate-passed bill in any case, unless there is actually a conference, and there is an effort to try to come together and pass a bill that will go to the President?

There has been absolutely no effort on the part of the House Republicans to meet in conference or to try to come to any kind of an agreement with the other body, so that we would have a bill that is finally passed. And the suggestion that somehow we are going to include all of these other tax measures in additional tax cuts, that is not possible under the circumstances. We know that that will simply increase the deficit. It will cost a lot more. And the reality is if we are going to do anything, the only thing we could possibly do at this point would be to pass the Senate version, and they are not willing to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT).

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) for yielding me time. And I appreciate his tenacity for bringing this out here for what I think is the 22nd time to make a point. Now, the next few days we are going to work on an \$87 billion bill for Iraq. The President has said we have to give him this money. If we do not give it to him, we are not patriotic. Anybody who wants to quibble about it or ask questions or raise any concerns, is clearly not patriotic and not supporting the troops.

Well, let me tell you something, this child tax credit does not go to a family whose father or mother is serving in Iraq today making \$29,000. Now, my colleague honestly said, a Congressman gets it, a Congressman gets it, but a sergeant serving in Iraq, getting shot at from every corner, his wife is back home someplace at Ft. Hood or whatever taking care of kids, and they do not get it.

Now, I know there are going to be a lot of people out here puffing out their chest and talking about how much they have cared about the troops and how much they care about winning the war and all the rest, they are going to talk about a bill that will have money in it to build schools in Iraq and to put the electric lights on in Iraq and

fix up the water system and the sewage system. But for kids of the soldiers, there is no money.

Now, if that is considered fair by the Republicans, I certainly hope they can explain it to the troops when they come home, how it was that we could spend billions of dollars fixing up Iraq, but we could not give money to the wife or the stay-at-home person who is taking care of some military kids, some money to provide better day care or better child care for them.

It is so unfair on the face of it, I do not know how you can have the gall to stand up here and say that you care. If you do not care about the kids, what are the fathers over there fighting for, or what are the mothers over there fighting for? They are fighting for their children and their future. And you are saying because you do not make enough money, you are not going to get it. If you make enough, like a Congressman, you make whatever we make, you get it. But if you only make \$29,000, I guess you are not worth it or your kids are not worth it.

I do not know how they explain that. It makes no sense in human terms. It may make some budgetary sense when you drive the country \$500 billion in debt in one year, I guess you got to cut somewhere, so let us cut the kids that belong to some sergeant or some lance corporal in the Marines or some chief petty officer in the United States Navy. They do not need it, because we got to buy this other stuff, whatever it is, in Iraq.

That is what is wrong with this bill and has been wrong from the very start. The people at the bottom, who need it most, do not get it. And they knew that when they came out of the Committee on Ways and Means that my distinguished colleague from Washington and I both sit on. They knew it. They knew they were not going to get this money, and they just glossed it over and said, well, we do not have to worry about that. Well, somebody has to worry about the sergeant's kids, and, boy, it better be the United States Congress that does it.

I urge the adoption of the motion.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to respond to the point of the military families not receiving child credit.

The House-passed bill, H.R. 1308, does not deny the child credit to military families. Military families, including those who are deployed abroad, are already receiving a refundable child tax credit, and they will continue to receive a refundable child credit under the House-passed bill.

The Democrat motion to instruct would only increase the refundable child tax credit to some military families, by allowing them to take into account income that is currently tax free when they compute their refundable credit if they are in a combat zone.

I think it is important to also bring up that in our provision, H.R. 1308, that

we provide additional tax relief for members of the Armed Services including capital gains tax relief on home sales, tax free death gratuity payments, and of course, tax free dependent care assistance which is child care assistance, and that these provisions provide \$806 million of tax relief to people who are members of the Armed Forces over the next 11 years.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON).

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, here we are at the end of September, and I find it pretty remarkable we are still talking about this.

I am convinced that most people in this country expect us to come back here and get something done. I really do. When I meet with my constituents back home, there may be this issue that they care about or that issue they care about, but at the end of the day, they are looking for people to come back here and try to get something done.

I supported H.R. 1308, the House passed-bill. I supported that. I also recognize that the United States Senate voted 94 to 2, 94 to 2, to fix this one problem. If we want to talk about the art of what is possible, and to get something done, then we ought to support this motion we are talking about right now.

Let us talk about what is fair. Let us talk about what is right, and let us try to get something done. We are talking about folks in a lower-income situation. This was in the bill when the House and the Senate were first negotiating this tax cut package this last spring. It was taken out, \$3.5 billion, which in the grand scheme of the overall cost of the bill was 1 percent, but it was taken out.

But it is a pretty important \$3.5 billion, pretty important to those families of all those kids. It is really important. It is so important, in fact, that 94 out of 96 senators thought so and voted to fix this problem. What I do not understand is, we come over here to the House of Representatives and this breaks down into a partisan issue. I do not get it. It sure was not partisan in the United States Senate. Everybody, just about everybody other than two, sure felt it was the right thing to do. So I would encourage all of us to take a little bit of a step back from the rhetoric, a little bit of a step back from trying to pursue what may be the ultimate and perfect piece of legislation in some people's eyes.

Let us get away from looking at the art of perfection, and let us look at the art of what is possible. There is no question that if the House of Representatives passes this measure and agrees to go to conference with the Senate to move this package for these kids that are in that income bracket of 10 to \$26,000, that it is going to get done. We can get something done around here.

As I said at the start of my comments, I think that is what people in this country are looking for. They are looking for this Congress to make some progress, get something done. I encourage passage of this motion.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to point out, again, I listened to what the gentleman said in response to the gentleman from her home State, and it just seems like it is the same pattern, it seems like it is the same pattern every time we bring up this motion where my colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle, and again I am not saying they are not well-intentioned, but they keep talking about the House bill as a sort of panacea because of the fact that it has all these other tax cuts, which I think add up to something like \$80 billion in additional debt that is not paid for.

And my colleague from Utah made a very good point when he said we should be talking not about pie in the sky, but what is possible. And I think that my Republican colleagues know full well that there is absolutely no way that an \$80 billion-deficit-creating bill is going to pass the other body and go to the President.

□ 1415

That is not going to happen. This can be fixed. This problem can be fixed with the addition of simply \$3.5 billion which is in the Senate bill, which is what my motion asks that be enacted, is fully offset I think primarily with some provisions with Customs duties. That is what is possible.

It is not possible to talk about an \$80 billion package, and what is happening essentially is that the Republicans in the House are using this as a ruse. They have no intention of ever passing this \$80 billion bill. If they did, they would have the conference meet, which it has not. It has not met, and I keep saying that over and over again. They are in the majority. The Democrats are in the minority. They control whether or not the conference is going to meet and what kind of a bill is going to pass. Oftentimes they do not even consult with us; but in this case, the conference has not even met.

So what I keep hearing from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle about the House version, as if it is somehow out there and is going to become law or is something they are working on, there is no truth to that whatever.

I just wanted to point out, this is what the Republican leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), said back in June. He said, "To me it is a little difficult to give tax relief to people who do not pay income tax." There are so many speakers, so many Members on the Republican side that have made it quite clear over and over again that they have no intention of moving

the legislation. Here are some quotes that were made by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) June 10: "Ain't going to happen," regarding the Senate-passed child tax credit bill.

The gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) says in *The Wall Street Journal* June 13: "There are worse things than the child tax credit bill not happening."

Let us see what else we have here. The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the conference leader on the Republican side, June 1: "We will let the conference take as long as it takes."

The conference has not even met.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and neighbor from New Jersey for highlighting this issue and all the good work he does, and let me just pick up on the last point he was making about whether these child tax credit benefits should go to families that, in the words of some in this Chamber, do not pay taxes.

I would think that it would be embarrassing to the authors of the rule that resulted in this bill that 250,000 children of active duty servicemen and -women would not be eligible for this. We have heard this before, and at risk of repeating some of what the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) has said, I really want to emphasize this. I mean, the Children's Defense Fund and others point out that hundreds of thousands of children of teachers, nurses, farmers would be left behind.

It really gets at the heart of what these tax cuts are. They are not to stimulate the economy. They are not to inject some fairness in a very complicated tax code. Quite simply, they are to provide some benefits to the upper-income segments of American society in some misguided hope that will trickle down to benefit the families of teachers and nurses and farmers and servicemen and -women. It does not work that way.

178,000 children of farming families, 567,000 children of nurses or hospital orderlies, 337,000 children of teachers are calculated to be left out in this child tax credit. The rationale given by the leaders on the other side of the aisle for preventing these families from receiving the expanded child tax credit was that the total cost of the tax legislation could not exceed \$350 billion over 10 years. Adjustments had to be made. Adjustments had to be made. So these nurses, orderlies, servicemen and -women, farmers, teachers are categorized as adjustments or, more to the point, their children are somehow less worthy and adjusted out of this.

Other tax analysts have noted that the cost of the tax credit provision of what we are talking about here with the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and this child tax correction, the cost of this correction is less than

3 percent of the total cost of the dividend and capital gains provisions. It did not take much of an adjustment to fix this, but I guess adjustments had to be made.

At a time when American families are struggling to make ends meet, at a time when if we really want to stimulate the economy we would put money in the hands of people who need it most and, therefore, would spend it the quickest, at a time when families of Reservists and other military personnel are facing financial difficulty, at a time when jobs continue to be lost throughout the country at an alarming rate, what could be more important than helping America's families by putting a few extra dollars in their pockets?

I thank my colleague from the neighboring district in New Jersey for yielding me the time.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to call attention again to the fact that the Republican majority simply does not want to deal with this issue and that is why we have had no conference, and the easiest way to point that out is to make reference to an article in *Roll Call*, the *Hill* newspaper, dated September 10.

At that time, in that article, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, essentially said that he was not going to work out the differences between the separate House and Senate bills and did not want to be bothered dealing with the issue. The gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) was sent a letter from his counterpart in the Senate, Senator GRASSLEY, who is the chairman of the finance committee; and in that letter, Mr. GRASSLEY basically said that he wanted to work out the differences between the two Houses on the bill.

In the *Roll Call* article, Chairman GRASSLEY is quoted as saying, "I suppose I could call a conference meeting but I am not going to do that unless it is going to be productive, and right now it does not look like it would be." Mr. GRASSLEY is saying that because the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) has simply been uncooperative and does not want the conference to meet because he does not want a bill.

My motion tonight instructs both the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) and his colleagues in the House Republican leadership to stop their delaying tactics and to finally sit down with Chairman GRASSLEY. If we look at the motion, it actually calls for certain actions to take place with regard to the conference.

Mr. Speaker, my Democratic colleagues and I are clearly not the only ones frustrated. Chairman GRASSLEY expressed his frustration again in that *Roll Call* article when he stated, "The Democrats will not let it be dead and I

do not blame them. If I was them and the majority party was not doing something about it, I would certainly make an issue of it, too."

So again, Mr. Speaker, I do not know how many times we are supposed to come down here on the floor and keep making the point that this is not only an important matter, but this is a matter that deserves the attention of the Republican leadership, and so far there has been certainly no indication that the Republican leadership seeks to address this. The only time we hear anything from the Republican side is when we make a motion and my colleagues on the other side come down here to oppose it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The Chair would remind Members it is inappropriate to quote communications from Senators in the context of this debate.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak on this matter; but as I listened to this debate, I decided to make a few comments.

There is waste in the private sector, just like there is waste in the public sector; but the waste in the private sector pales in comparison to the waste that is in the public sector. So it has been proven all over the world that the more money that can be left in the private sector, in whatever country, the better off everyone is, the better off especially the poor and low-income people are because more jobs are created, the lower prices are; and so all over this world it has been proven that the more money government takes, either legally or illegally or corruptly, that the people who are hurt the most are the poor and working people of that particular country. In every country where we have been able to keep the amount of the GDP that the government takes to a relatively small amount, the better off everyone is, especially the poor and lower-income people.

I am probably one of the least partisan Members of this Congress. I have been here 15 years. I do not think I have ever mentioned the word "Republican" and "Democrat" in any speech that I have ever given, but I mentioned to the gentlewoman from Washington State a while ago an article I read a couple of years ago in the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine, and David Brooks wrote an article, and he compared Montgomery County, Maryland, one of the wealthiest counties in this country, which went 68 percent for Vice President Gore to Franklin County, Pennsylvania, 70 miles to the north which went 68 percent for President Bush. What he said was it is just exactly the opposite of the image the media tries to portray or some of those on the other side who participate in

what I think has actually been described as class warfare.

This author, Mr. Brooks, said that when he went to Franklin County, Pennsylvania, he tried to find a meal that cost more than \$20, he could not. The Cracker Barrel was the most expensive restaurant. He said the death of Dale Earnhart in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, was a big event. In Montgomery County, Maryland, they did not even know who Dale Earnhart was.

What I am saying to my colleague is the most liberal areas in this country are always the wealthiest areas, and if they want to talk about class warfare, let us talk about it. Our party is very much a middle-income, particularly even lower-middle-income party, and the easier people get money the more liberal they are politically. It is just like a kid. If one gives a kid a \$20 bill, it burns a hole in his pocket until he spends it. If he has to go out and earn it, he is a little more careful with the way he spends it; and our party, the Republican Party, we have some people with money but they are almost always people who started with nothing or very little and who made some money.

That is what we are trying to do with these tax cuts. We are trying to give people an opportunity to better themselves, and the people who get the bulk of the tax breaks that we came up with are almost entirely in the middle-income levels of our society. So we get pretty tired of hearing all this class warfare that is going on on the other side, when 9 out of the 10 wealthiest contributors politically in this country are to the Democratic Party. That was in an article in the Roll Call newspaper today. So if they want to play class warfare, we can play it; but we should not have that on this floor.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, I respect my colleague who just spoke, but I just I cannot believe his suggestion that somehow the Democrats are committing class warfare. I mean, it seems to me that what the Republicans have done with regard to this child tax credit is the classic example of class warfare or class discrimination on the side of the wealthy.

I started out this debate by pointing out that I, as a Member of Congress, who makes, I guess, about \$150,000 a year, received a check back in June or July for \$1,200 from my three children, and I am making \$150,000 a year; and at the same time, the person who is making between \$10,000 and \$29,000 or whatever the figure is, does not get the child tax credit because of the Republicans' unwillingness to provide it to them in this massive tax cut bill that they passed.

If it is class warfare, it is class warfare on the Republican side because they want to give the money to wealthy people or certainly higher-income people and not give it to the working person who is making between

\$10 and \$20-some-plus thousand dollars a year. I have no idea how my colleagues can justify that and say somehow that is class warfare unless it is class warfare to help the wealthy on the Republican part.

□ 1430

I have heard again and again, maybe not so much tonight but on other occasions, this idea on the part of the Republicans that we should not give these people that are making between \$10,000 and \$20,000 a year this additional tax credit because they do not pay enough taxes. And again, on the Democratic side, we have made the point that the parents of these children do indeed pay taxes, with 7.65 percent of their earnings going to pay for Social Security and Medicare.

An analysis released earlier this year by The New York Times found that families with pretax incomes of \$20,319 pay more than \$2,800 in total taxes. That is 14 percent of their income. We are talking about working people. We are talking about the very same people that my colleague on the Republican side seems to suggest that he represents or is trying to help. These are not people that are not working or sitting around, these are working people.

Why should I, as a Congressman, or any of my colleagues get the extra \$1,200 and not give it to these people? It is simply unfair. I think the Democrats are simply saying, let us be fair. Let us not discriminate against working people who happen to be at the lower end of the income spectrum.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think it has been an interesting discussion this afternoon. I am glad that we had this discussion. I have listened to what the gentleman from New Jersey has said, and some of it has merit, but some of it, I believe, is a flawed argument.

We have included in our proposal, which passed the House by a vote of 224 to 201 several months ago, H.R. 1308, all the elements of the gentleman's proposal, but our bill is far better and far superior, and that is what has been kept out of this debate.

Our bill increases the child credit to \$1,000 per eligible child through the year 2010. The Democrat bill ensures that the child tax credit stays at the same level only through 2005, and then it reverts back to \$700. Our bill eliminates the marriage penalty in the tax credit. It raises the phase-out threshold for marriage couples. His bill creates a marriage penalty for married couples because it keeps the income levels below what our bill does.

Our bill accelerates the increase in the refundable child tax credit so that the 15 percent rate takes effect in 2003 instead of having to wait until 2005. His bill requires that the rate schedule be phased in and not become 15 percent until 2005.

In sum, Mr. Speaker, we passed a very, very good bill. We passed a bill with some Democrat support. This selecting out of a provision of our bill, which covers a number of very, very important topics, like providing tax relief and enhancing tax fairness for members of the Armed Forces, like suspending the tax-exempt status of designated terrorist organizations, like providing tax relief for astronauts who die on space missions, and like increasing the child tax credit to all people, including the ones he wishes to serve, and doing it far more quickly and for a greater length of time.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I encourage a "no" vote on this motion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and again, while I respect the arguments that my colleague from Washington is making on the Republican side, I really think it is the wrong argument to suggest that their bill includes ours and goes further.

The bottom line, and we have made this point over and over again, the Democrats are being realistic about what can be passed. This initiative began because there was a realization, after the Republican tax package passed, that these 12 million children at a lower income level were left out.

The other body made a valiant effort to say, okay, let us pass a bill that addresses this, that makes sure they get the credit, that their parents get the credit, that spends the \$3.5 billion that is necessary but does not add anything to the deficit by having it fully paid. Now, for the Republicans to come back and say, oh, well, that is all fine, but we will go further and come up with an \$80 billion package that will do a lot more is just a ruse, because they know the other body will never pass this. It is just another budget buster that is not paid for that will never go anywhere.

And the proof of that is that they have absolutely refused to even convene a conference. The chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means has made it clear he has no intention of ever convening the conference, which is really an outrage.

It is an outrage we are here on the House floor, again this evening, talking about the exclusion of these 12 million children. It is an outrage we are forced to bring up another motion to instruct conferees on an issue that should have been resolved 3 months ago. It is an outrage that the House and Senate Republicans, who took less than a week to reconcile differences between these two giant \$500 billion tax bills, cannot seem to come to an agreement on a much smaller bill to simply expand the tax credit to the parents of children earning between \$10,000 and \$26,000.

It is an outrage that my Republican colleagues seem content to leave Washington, yes, it is another day, we are

leaving for another week without resolving this injustice. And, Mr. Speaker, it is an outrage that President Bush, who last month advised House Republicans to pass this child tax credit legislation and send it to him so he can sign it, now sits silently as congressional Republicans do nothing. I have not heard anything from the President. His silence is an indication of his true intention. A very good indication, I think, that he is not truly looking to pass this legislation either.

And, finally, Mr. Speaker, I think it is outrageous not one Republican on the other side comes down here and talks about this other than when the Democrats bring it up, and they come down to oppose our motion to instruct. I do not know how many times I am going to have to join my Democratic colleagues here on the floor to point out the unfair treatment these hard-working American families received with the passage of the Republican tax bill.

All we are asking for, Mr. Speaker, is fairness. How can Republicans say it is fair to give a millionaire a tax break of more than \$90,000, or a Congressman like myself a tax break, while giving nothing to millions of working families? I do not think we should leave this city until this injustice is corrected, and we will certainly be back again to make the point.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). All time has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. BLACKBURN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, what is America if not a Nation that stands up for basic decency and human rights? What is America if it is not a people that speaks out for those who cannot speak out for themselves? And what will America become if we fail to speak out against dictators and despots who oppress and brutalize their own people?

China has for too long been at liberty to detain and torture and intimidate and oppress good men and women for their religious beliefs. As the world's greatest democracy and the symbol of hope for millions, America has a duty and an obligation to speak out for the oppressed people of the world. We fail in our duty if we do nothing.

It was the British philosopher and statesman Edmund Burke who said that Representatives owe you not just their industry but also their judgment. As Representatives and beholders of American ideals, we should speak out on the issue of the persecution of those of faith in China.

The litany of abuses committed by the Government of China toward its own people is long and senseless. I recently held a meeting with a number of groups who have spent years in documenting the numerous abuses committed by the Chinese Government upon the Chinese people. In the coming days, I will be highlighting the plight of different groups of long-suffering Chinese people so that colleagues can better understand the depth of this problem in China. The material I will be submitting today was prepared by the International Religious Freedom Commission, and I hope Members will read it.

As I close, 10 Catholic bishops are in China today under house arrest, and this government, our government, our Congress and the administration, does not act. The Protestant Church is being abused and beaten in China and we have refused to speak out. The Chinese have plundered Tibet, and yet the West is quiet. Muslims are being persecuted in the northwest portion of China, and yet the West speaks out not at all. The Falun Gong are being persecuted almost on a daily basis.

I think this is an opportunity to hear, in their own words, what all of these groups have to tell us in the Congress and us in the United States and us in the West about what is taking place, so that we know we should speak out on their behalf, particularly next year when the Geneva resolution with regard to condemning China on human rights comes up.

Depending on the religious organization in question, the Chinese government provided various justifications to defend its policy of repression. Its action to restrict religious belief and practice, however, go far beyond what is necessary to protect legitimate state interests.

Since 2001, the Communist government has engaged in a persistent campaign of banning some religious groups while insisting on registration for others. Many groups, particularly

Christian house churches, have refused, understandably fearful that providing membership rosters would lead to regular surveillance by party and government agencies.

The government's policy of designating religious or spiritual organizations as "cults" has led to tragic outcomes for millions of religious believers. All too often victims are sentenced to "re-education through labor camps," administered by the notorious Ministry of Public Security, which appears to perpetrate human rights abuses with absolute impunity. Persons adhering to "unacceptable" faiths have been given prison sentences of up to three years without a right to a hearing, without counsel and without judicial determination of their cases.

There are at least 30 million Protestant Christians in China. Mostly, believers belong to independent house churches. Purely on account of their faith, properties belonging to or used by such groups have been confiscated, closed, or destroyed and members have been detained, tortured, and subjected to other forms of government harassment.

In June 2003, 12 members of a house church in Guna Village in Yunnan province were arrested after they sought registration with the local government. On June 6, in response to the government's "invitation" to complete the registration process, the 12 church leaders were arrested for engaging in "feudalistic superstition." Eight of the 12 were immediately sentenced to three years in "re-education through labor" camps, while the other four were indicted and are being held for trial.

In late August 2003, local officials arrested 170 house church Christians in Nanyang county, Henan province after local police reportedly raided the meeting place where the worship service was being conducted. The report indicates that the 14 leaders of the group are currently being held in detention, possibly facing serious charges, while the other members were released after having been fined, fingerprinted, and warned against continuing their activities.

The Chinese Communist state has, since the 1950s, banned the Roman Catholic Church, replacing it with the state-approved Catholic Patriotic Association. Through this state organization, the Communist government has claimed the exclusive right to appoint Chinese bishops. Most Chinese clerics, however, have refused to accept the legitimacy of government appointees. As a result, many Roman Catholic bishops and priests have been harassed, detained, or imprisoned.

According to the Cardinal Kung Foundation, a number of Catholic bishops and priests who refuse to submit to government tutelage remain in prison or in detention and the status of other priests and lay persons remains unknown. As of August 2003, at least 10 Catholic bishops, including Bishop Su Zhimin, whose whereabouts are unknown, are imprisoned, in detention, under house arrests, or under surveillance.

In Tibet, Buddhist monks and nuns serve lengthy sentences for voicing their allegiance to the Dalai Lama. In point of fact, the great majority of Tibetan political prisoners are monks and nuns.

The longest-serving Tibetan political prisoner, Tagna Jigme Zangpo, was granted a medical parole to come to the United States in summer 2002 when he was in the middle of